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WHY THE COLLECTING WORLD  
HAS FINALLY WISED UP TO SARAH  
MYERSCOUGH'S UNSWERVING  
RESPECT FOR CRAFT. BY CAROLINE ROUX

NATURAL



This page:  
Gallerist Sarah Myerscough;  
photo courtesy of Sarah  
Myerscough Gallery.

Opposite page:  
Works by Marc Fish and  
Lin Fanglu inside the gallery's  
booth at Design Miami/ 2022;  
photo by James Harris.

# TURN





The Sarah Myerscough Gallery booth at Design Miami/ 2022; photo by James Harris.



“There used to be a negativity around what is perceived as craft,” says Sarah Myerscough, the London-based gallerist, with a smile, as she recounts the crowds swarming her booth during the final days of December 2022’s Design Miami/, where she received the accolade of Best Gallery Presentation. “By Sunday, we had to put up a rope, and let people in one by one.”

Collectors and museum curators were among the throng – one of the latter earmarking a sinuous cabinet by Christopher Kurtz, magicked from satiny blonde tulipwood, for a major New York institution – while Rihanna enquired about several pieces when she made an off-hours tour. The singer, apparently, was especially drawn to a work by Marc Fish: a console so exquisitely hand-carved into a ribbon-like form that it had reduced another visitor to tears. “He literally welled up,” says Myerscough, a gallerist whose moment has most definitely come.

Myerscough could well be considered the leading advocate of a type of innovative craft that has never seemed timelier. The artists she nurtures (and truly, she does) are wedded to experiments in natural materials that are both ethically sound and aesthetically amazing; sustainable and seductive. Marlène Huissoud, for example, who is based in Paris, has used silkworm cocoons and honeybee bio resin to make cabinets that balance like chic beehives on spindly legs; the Mexican artist Fernando Laposse has developed a way to turn agave into fibres so sleek and sensuous that his benches

have the allure of a perfectly groomed Afghan hound. “Sarah really cares about developing more ambitious, unusual projects. She comes to the studio, listens to the background story, completely understands the work, then goes off and explains to collectors why it’s important,” the designer Marcin Rusak has said, citing her support of his complex method of setting semi-decayed flowers in a sustainable resin.

Myerscough – charming, fiftysomething and often clad in Issey Miyake – had her own conversion around 17 years ago. She was working as an art advisor, mostly concerned with photography and painting, when she encountered a number of stunning works in turned wood in the London home of collectors Hana and Brian Smouha. “I couldn’t help myself, I just fell in love,” she says. “So I started working with all these amazing artists in wood, and then extended my interest to those who were doing incredible things in all sorts of natural materials.” One of her earliest charges, Ernst Gamperl, went on to win the inaugural Loewe Craft Prize in 2017 with his extraordinary sculptures where the inherent properties of wood – branches, knots and splits – determine the final form. This year, she took on representation of the 2021 winner, Lin Fanglu, whose monumental textile works in pure cotton and linen carry forward techniques perfected by the women of the Bai and Dong Chinese ethnic minority groups.



This page:  
Designer Marc Fish with  
his *Ethereal Sycamore  
Seed* sculpture.

Opposite page:  
A console table and wall light  
from Fish’s *Ethereal* series.

Photos courtesy of  
Sarah Myerscough Gallery.



“I want to inspire people to change their interiors. To understand that this work, for all its fabulous natural credentials, is of the highest quality and extremely glamorous. And it’s made to last not just functionally, but hopefully emotionally too.”



This page and opposite:  
A look inside Myerscough's  
London gallery; photos  
by Michael Harvey.

In March, Myerscough will open a new space in Mayfair, alongside London's most prestigious fine and contemporary art galleries. "I do have a great deal of confidence in my ownership of a certain area of practice," she says. "But other galleries are seeing the light, and I need to continually up my game." Her dream is to close the gap between what is considered contemporary art and craft. "I want to absorb fine artists into my group, to blur the boundaries completely."

Meanwhile, as Myerscough proved so deftly in Miami in December, the collecting world has certainly woken up to the desirability of her designers. "What I really wanted to demonstrate to people was how this kind of work would look in their own homes," she says of the painstaking curation of her stand, its walls painted in carefully chosen bleached colors by Kelly Wearstler for Farrow & Ball. "I want to inspire people to change their interiors. To understand that this work, for all its fabulous natural credentials, is of the highest quality and extremely glamorous. And it's made to last not just functionally, but hopefully emotionally too."